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TAB "A"

**ADVANTAGES ACCRUING TO THE USSR FROM THE ACQUISITION OF THE
AVIATION FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL OF WESTERN EUROPE (NIE-40)**

- I. SUMMARY OF RESOURCES**
- II. OFFENSIVE ADVANTAGES**
- III. DEFENSIVE ADVANTAGES**

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TAB "A"

ADVANTAGES ACCRUING TO THE USSR FROM THE ACQUISITION OF THE
AVIATION FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL OF WESTERN EUROPE (NIE-40)

I. SUMMARY OF RESOURCES

The current air resources in Western Europe, including naval, which would presumably be available to the USSR in the event of Soviet occupation by mid-1952 consist principally of 775 air bases, 250,000 trained air personnel, civil and military, and approximately 10,500 aircraft, civil and military. Acquisition of these resources plus selected aviation research facilities would not only enhance the present military capabilities of the USSR, but also materially increase its long range military potential. The positional advantages of the newly acquired air bases would have great strategic significance in the furtherance of Soviet military objectives.

Of the 775 air bases noted above, about 200 are capable of handling the principal Soviet offensive and defensive aircraft now in existence. For the purposes of this study these and other air facilities of Western Europe are numerically listed in Tab "C" by country, classification and types of Soviet aircraft which could be accommodated.

The approximately 10,500 aircraft currently listed for Western Europe are divided into military aircraft and civil aircraft. The total combat aircraft (inventory) available to the countries designated in NIE-40 numbers approximately 4,500 of the less than 500 civil aircraft, there are

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40 Constallations, 28 DC-6's and 69 C-54's. Insofar as personnel are concerned there are approximately 12,000 military pilots and 1500-2000 commercial pilots. See Tabs "B" and "D" for complete breakdown of aircraft and personnel.

II OFFENSIVE ADVANTAGES

The acquisition of the air resources of Western Europe by the USSR would result in the following principal advantages to the offensive capabilities of the Soviet forces:

a. Soviet acquisition of air bases in Western Europe would extend the Soviet base complex several hundred miles westward to the English channel and Atlantic Ocean, and southward to the Mediterranean. Such acquisition would enlarge the area of the Atlantic within the combat radii of Soviet bombers, enabling the Soviet Air Force to employ light bombers, including jet light bombers, against Allied merchant and naval vessels off the coasts of France and Spain and in the Mediterranean. Some of the air bases are suitable for medium bombers and would permit use of TU-4's against shipping as far west as the Canadian ^{TRAINING} ~~training~~ of the Atlantic convoy routes. The Soviets would also have increased airborne capabilities against Allied air bases or other installations in North Africa, Iceland or the Azores and particularly against the United Kingdom. Some of these air bases could be utilized for Soviet atomic assaults against Newfoundland, Labrador and continental eastern United States.

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b. The shorter radii of action would permit a greater number of sorties and greater intensity of attack by tactical aircraft against targets currently within the combat radii of the Soviet Air Force, including shipping in the North Sea and Mediterranean, all targets in the United Kingdom, and North Africa. Such shorter radii of action would allow greater payloads by strategic bombers (Tu-4's) in conventional or atomic attacks against targets in the United Kingdom, Azores, Iceland, and North Africa. The Soviets would also be able to furnish jet fighter escorts for offensive missions over the UK and North Africa. This would apply to airborne operations, antishipping attacks and aerial mining as well as to every sort of bombing mission overland.

c. Soviet possession and utilization of Western European air bases would deny to the Western powers a buffer zone, which would otherwise permit early warning of Soviet air attacks against the off-continent targets named above. Such denial would include those Western European air bases now situated close to the frontiers of Soviet-controlled territories. The Western powers would also be denied the opportunity to observe certain Soviet air bases in Germany and Austria from air corridors currently allotted to the West. In addition, Western powers' air defense against attacks originating on the European continent would lack depth over land, and its bases would be confined to: (1) the UK; (2) coastal areas of North Africa and (3) carrier task forces.

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d. Soviet possession of the Western Europe areas under consideration would also deny to the West the air defense equipment, personnel, and structural organization of the Western European nations and SHAPE. The Soviets would also acquire most of the bomber aircraft, offensive ordnance, related parts and facilities, POL, and trained personnel of the pertinent air forces.

III DEFENSIVE ADVANTAGES

The acquisition of the air resources of Western Europe by the USSR would result in the following principal advantages to the defensive capabilities of the Soviet forces:

- a. The Western powers would be denied the use of air bases on the continent of Europe for the strategic and tactical bombing of enemy targets and for anti-submarine warfare purposes. They would also be denied the services of the aircraft repair facilities and trained personnel of the continental countries as well as the utilization of available aviation gasoline, ordnance and other stocks on hand.
- b. The defensive operations of the Soviet Air Forces would be extended in depth westward and southward thus increasing their capabilities for air defense of the homeland against carrier-based or shore-based attacks from the North Sea, Atlantic, Mediterranean and the United Kingdom. This extension in depth would also provide earlier warning of Allied air attacks aimed at Soviet targets if these attacks originated from the periphery of the European land mass.

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c. Soviet air forces disposed in Western Europe might also enjoy greater security from atomic bombing attacks due to possible Western reluctance to employ atomic bombs against Western Europe.

d. The Soviets would also acquire many fighter and reconnaissance aircraft plus such radar equipment and antiaircraft artillery as exist, as well as trained air personnel, and could adopt some of these advantages to air defense use. Seized stocks of aviation gasoline could be used in Soviet aircraft on defensive missions, and native ground personnel might be retrained to work on Soviet fighter aircraft; the problem, however, of assuring the political reliability of such personnel would be at least as difficult as that in the present satellite air forces. In addition, the Soviets would gain valuable intelligence on Western air equipment, training methods, tactics and organization, particularly as they relate to NATO and SHAPE.

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